

CHAIRMANS REPORT TO NZWCA 2013

Unfortunately I don't feel I can say that I am reporting on a year that will be remembered for the right reasons in the farming industry. Wool prices have been rather poor, especially if you look well back and add inflation. I do worry about the sustainability of the whole industry, especially when the price for meat is where it is. That is without considering the climate.

On that gloomy note though, I can only say that hopefully as a profession (some would question the use of that word but we should take pride in our job and be professional about it) we can lift the quality of what is presented to market, be that auction or contract, and help the grower get the best possible price for their product in whatever market is prevailing at the time.

At the AGM last year there was a discussion around creating a code of conduct. A draft was drawn up and our November board meeting adopted a code of conduct, which was circulated with the newsletter in February. I am sure that it isn't asking too much for Wool Classers to live up to these basic standards. We should all be taking pride in our work and set an example outside of work, while still remembering to have fun.

Once again I have been putting the names and phone numbers of members on the website that have given permission to publish their details. How many growers use this to find a classer is unknown and at this stage. Hopefully it will get to be known that there is a list there and they may be able to find a classer. There may also be some pressure put on classers who are not there to pay their registration fees: of course they may be paid up and not want to have their name published, but if they are wanting work it is an easy way to pick some up. It is also a way for members to see if someone is paid up and helping sustain the organisation here to serve member's needs. If you have something you want the organisation to do please ask, we are not mind readers so may not know what you expect of us. This is not a guarantee that we will get it done but we definitely won't if we don't know what you do expect of us.

Payment of subs is always a something that everyone hates but I consider the amount cheap. It is the cheapest sub I pay. If we could ensure that only members who have paid their subs could claim to be a classer, we would have higher membership support. It would be, also, an easy way to make sure that non-registered or unqualified people are not undercutting us in both price and quality. In many organisations that have a registration process, you can't even suggest you might be doing the job without being paid up. My recent entry into Real Estate has shown me that if I don't pay my \$750 annual sub, by due date, I have a stand down period of 2 years. We should look at the subscription as an investment, not as a cost.

Dave has had to once again eliminate quite a few people from consideration for merit awards due to not being paid up, unfortunately there aren't many other things we can do except try to get the brokers to enforce the rules: no paid sub, no use of a number. I don't see how this is difficult but we haven't been able to get them on board, something we all must keep at them about. If you know someone is putting their brand on a clip but won't pay a sub, tell the registrar, you're not being a snitch, you're helping to protect yourself and your organisation.

Our thanks must go to both Dave and Annette for the work they have done through the year. Without someone keeping things moving in the background, we would have no organisation at all. There are those that question the value of having paid people doing the administration but without them we would soon collapse. Having someone able to liaise with brokers and chase up classers whose work isn't up to standard helps protect us all, and the integrity of the industry.

I must also thank the other members of the board who have willingly given up their time, regardless of the thanks that may or may not be given. Thanks must also go to the partners of board members who have the phone tied up for complete evenings, especially when we have a board meeting by teleconference to ensure our work is carried out at minimal cost to the organisation.

Thank you

Bill Dowle

Chairman NZWCA.